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Small-Scale Agriculture Today

Office for Small-Scale Agriculture



WINTER 1993

U.S. Department of Agriculture - Cooperative State Research Service - Agricultural Research For A Better Tomorrow

AT ISSUE...FOODS AND HEALTH

If a food tastes good, it's probably bad for you. Right? Wrong!

Contrary to what many people might think, there really are no "good" foods or "bad" foods -- and that's "good news." It means people really can "have their cake and eat it too." Enjoy! BUT...take it easy on foods that are high in fat and sugars. Have them less often or eat smaller portions. It's the bottom line that counts -- your total diet over a day or more, not just one food or one meal.

You can learn to adjust your food intake in small ways that can give big returns in terms of your health. Take fat, for example. Diets low in fat -- especially saturated fat -- help reduce your risk of heart attack and certain types of cancer. On the average, active women need to reduce fat by about 15 grams and active men about 20 grams each day in order to get their daily fat intake down from about 36-37 percent of calories to where it should be -- about 30 percent of calories.

Here are 10 easy ways to slash fat from your diet:

- Drink two glasses of skim milk (totaling 2 grams fat) instead of whole milk (16 grams fat) each day.
- Have two slices of "veggie" pizza without the "works" -- sausage, pepperoni, olives, etc (24 grams fat).
- Go easy on the salad dressing -- each tablespoon has about 9 grams of fat. Alternative: use a reduced-calorie or nonfat type!
- Read labels! Note that some frozen yogurts and ice milk have only about 0 to 3 grams fat per 1/2-cup serving. Gourmet ice cream provides 12 or more grams fat. A super sundae made with a cup of premium ice cream topped with hot fudge sauce, nuts, and whipped cream weighs in at 39 grams fat!
- Take it easy on gravy! Like lots of homemade gravy on your mashed potatoes? One-fourth cup of gravy made from meat drippings has 7 grams fat. (If you're doing the cooking, mash the potatoes with lower fat milk, less margarine or butter and use broth rather than drippings for the gravy.)

- Try a tuna sandwich made with water-packed tuna and nonfat mayonnaise (less than 1 gram fat) in place of oil-packed tuna and regular mayonnaise (16 grams fat).
- Choose lower fat cuts of meat and trim the fat. Example: Three ounces of lean from eye of round roast beef provides only 4 grams fat. Three ounces of lean and fat from roast prime rib has 31 grams.
- Choose a broiled chicken breast half without the skin (3 grams fat) instead of batter fried with the skin (18 grams fat).
- Try not to go "hog wild" on peanuts! Each 1/4 cup has 18 grams fat. Lower fat snack alternatives include popcorn (only a trace of fat for 1 cup of plain, air-popped) or pretzels (about 2 grams fat for 10 twists).
- Do you really need that glazed donut? Skip it and save 13 grams fat.

One of the newest tools designed to help you learn the "how-to's" of eating healthy is "The Food Guide Pyramid," recently released by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Tested for its ability to communicate sound nutrition messages to both children and adults, the pyramid graphic focuses on the relative amounts of foods to choose each day from the five major food groups and advises consumers to use fats, oils, and sweets sparingly. Foods from each of these food groups can be sources of fat or sugars, depending on your food selections and preparation methods.

For a copy of the booklet that tells all about the pyramid and how to use it to help achieve a healthy diet, send a \$1 check or money order made out to the Superintendent of Documents to the Consumer Information Center, Department 159-Y, Pueblo, CO 81009. (Comments of Dianne Odland, Nutritionist, USDA, Human Nutrition Information Service, Hyattsville, Maryland, August 1992)

(Mention of commercial enterprises or brand names does not constitute endorsement or imply preference by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.)

HELP!

The number of people receiving this publication continues to grow and OSSA likes that! However, with growth, there are problems. We need your help and cooperation to keep the OSSA mailing list current. PLEASE drop us a note to let us know of any change of address, and more important, always list both the old and new address. Mail to USDA-CSRS-OSSA, 328 Aerospace, Washington, DC 20250-2200. Thank you.

TOPICS AND TECHNOLOGY

Cashmere Goats - This is the latest factsheet of the series "A Small-Scale Agriculture Alternative" from the USDA Office for Small-Scale Agriculture. Free, the publication provides sources of information and was co-authored by a woman who is involved in cashmere goat farming. Contact: Bud Kerr, USDA/CSRS/OSSA, Suite 328, Washington, DC 20250-2200; telephone 202-401-1805, Fax 202-401-1804.

Season Extender - Green winters is a 14-page manual containing concise, straightforward instructions any semi-skilled person can follow to build a solar-heated walk-in season extender building. The price for the manual is \$11.20, check payable to Ozark Exotica. Contact: Jack Frazier, Route 3, Box 500-C, Theodosia, MO 65761; telephone 417-273-4949.

Opportunity - "Endive, an enormously popular consumer staple in the Netherlands, represents one of the country's expertly cultivated, top-quality products, which has to date barely scratched the surface of U.S. market potential." (The Produce News, June 27, 1992, p. 6)

Information - The High Value Crop Newsletter takes a step-by-step approach to discussing climate requirements, cultural care, and marketing issues for a variety of crops. A computer spreadsheet is included to help growers analyze risk and potential revenue. A sample copy of the newsletter is \$6. A subscription consists of 12 monthly issues for \$60. Contact: Claude Sweet, Sweet Enterprises, 7488 Comet View Court, San Diego, CA 92120-2004; telephone 619-286-1534, Fax 619-286-9255.

Tip - Greenhouses need standby generators; otherwise, operators would suffer severe financial losses if an electrical outage occurred during extremely cold weather.

Question - How often should my kids eat fruits and vegetables? Answer is somewhere in this newsletter.

Profound - "We are what we eat and its killing us if we live long enough." (Perry L. Adkisson, Chancellor, The Texas A & M University Systems, October 6, 1992)

Healthy Harvest - Subtitled "A Global Directory of Sustainable Agriculture and Horticulture Organizations," this 212-page book is a useful reference and costs \$22.95. Contact:

agAccess, 603 Fourth Street, Davis, CA 95616; telephone 916-756-7177.

Irradiation - "Poultry processors received approval yesterday to begin zapping chickens, turkeys, and game hens with gamma rays to kill bacteria. H. Russell Cross, administrator of the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service, said that using radiation will pose no problem to consumers and have no adverse effects on poultry's nutritional value." (The Sun, September 19, 1992, p. 21C)

Incomes - Disparity between farm and nonfarm incomes is shrinking. "The median income for farm households is now \$84 less than the \$28,908 median income of nonfarming households. This is a significant gain for farm households since 1987, when they were earning \$2,000 below the median income of \$26,026 for nonfarm households." (The Wall Street Journal, June 9, 1992, p. 3)

Two Bulletins - "Housing As We Grow Older" (60 pages) and "Private Drinking Water Supplies" (60 pages) are available for \$6 each from the Northeast Regional Agricultural Engineering Service (NRAES), 152 Riley-Robb Hall, Cooperative Extension, Ithaca, NY 14853-5701; telephone 607-255-7654.

Grow and Sell Guide - "Backyard Market Gardening," the entrepreneur's guide to selling what you grow, is available for \$25. Discover how easy and profitable it is to grow and sell vegetables, fruits, flowers, herbs, and small livestock from the information in this new 351-page book. Contact: Pat Foreman, Good Earth Publications, P.O. Box 4352, Burlington, VT 05406; telephone 802-985-8184.

How Much Is Enough? - If you're trying to eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day, take notes on how to count your servings.

- Fruit, one medium piece fresh; 1/2 cup of cooked or raw fruit; 3/4 cup juice.
- Vegetables, one cup raw leafy greens; 1/2 cup others.

(USA Today, July 2, 1992, p. 10)

At a Glance - Volunteers are needed for the Rural Enterprise Adaptation Program (REAP) to implement several objectives to aid private farmers in the former Soviet Union. Contact: Bill Mueller, REAP International, 3181 120th St., NE, Solon, IA 52333; telephone 319-848-7387.

Grim Harvest - "The Corporate Reapers: The Book of Agribusiness" is for everyone interested in farm, food, and land policy needs. Order copies of the 600-page softback book at \$21.75 a copy. Contact: Karen Horton, Essential Information, P.O. Box 19405, Washington, DC 20036; telephone 202-387-8030.

Caution! - "Children can be poisoned by eating too many vitamins or by swallowing adult vitamins. About 30,000 cases of nonfatal overdoses of vitamin supplements are reported each

year in children under six, the American Association of Poison Control Centers says." (The Washington Times, September 27, 1992, p. 18A)

Tip - Extra vitamin E reduces the tissue-damaging oxygen radicals the body generates during exercise. For more information, contact: Mohsen Meydani, USDA-ARS, Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging, Tufts University, Boston, MA 02111; telephone 617-556-3126.

Healthy Diet - Fats should provide no more than 30 percent of calorie intake. Drink skim instead of whole milk, and eat more fresh fruit, vegetables, and grains. Use olive and canola oils for cooking. (The USA Today, October 8, 1992, p. 14A)

Eating Right - Invest in future health and well-being with the help of "Nancy Clark's Sport Nutrition Guidebook" and "Eating on the Run" (second edition). Both of these resources (\$14.95 each, plus shipping and handling) are available from Human Kinetics Publishers (HKP). Contact: Jolene Rupe, H KP, 1607 North Market Street, Champaign, IL 61825-5076; telephone 1-800-747-4457.

Older and Healthier - On average, older employees (age 45 to 64) are absent from work 16 days per 100 workers per year; their younger counterparts (age 18 to 44) miss an average of 20 days. (The Johns Hopkins Newsletter, April 1992, p.1)

Answer - They should eat at least five servings a day for good health and to help avoid cancer, heart disease, and other health risks. Says who? Both the American Medical Association and the National Academy of Science.

Sage Advice - "Be careful about reading health books. You may die of a misprint".... (Mark Twain)

New Book - "Superpigs and Wondercorn" looks at both sides of biotechnology. Cost is \$24.95. Contact: Bayard Stern, Lyons & Burford Publishers, 31 West 21st., New York, NY 10010; telephone 212-620-9580.

Wanted - You are needed by Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (VOCA), a nonprofit organization providing short-term technical assistance in agriculture to developing nations. VOCA will cover travel expenses and living costs. For more information contact: Jenny Hughel, VOCA, 50 F Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20001; telephone 202-383-4961.

Commercial Potential - The 272-page book, "Uncommon Fruits Worthy of Attention," delves into the history, cultivation, harvest, and use of lesser known fruits. To obtain a copy, send a check for \$20 for (hardcover) or \$11 for (softcover). Contact: Lee Reich, Plumtree Nursery, 387 Springtown Rd., New Paltz, NY 12561; telephone 914-255-0417.

Scholarships - The National Scholars Program is a major effort of the USDA and the seventeen 1890 historically black land-grant institutions to award scholarships to students to

attend one of the 17 universities or colleges and study agriculture, food, or natural resources. For further information, contact your high school counselor or one of the seventeen 1890 land grant institutions. (Note: Submit all application materials by February 1, 1993.)

Different - Through a multidisciplinary approach involving researchers in the fine arts, sociology, psychology, urban planning, forestry, environmental psychology, history, and the community, the authors of "Role of Horticulture in Human Well-Being" develop an overview of how plants affect people. The 254- page book costs \$49.50. Contact: Deborah D. Garman, Timber Press Inc., 9999 SW Wilshire, Suite 124, Portland, OR 97225; telephone 1-800-327-5680.

Conservation Compliance - In the 15-minute videotape "Straight Talk About Your Conservation Plan," USDA Soil Conservation Service (SCS) Chief Bill Richards answers farmers tough questions. The video is available on loan by contacting: National Association of Conservation Districts, P.O. Box 855, League City, TX 77574-0855.

Recycling - The 96-page book "The Frugal Gardener - More than 200 Ways to Save Resources (and Money) by Recycling in Your Garden" costs \$8.95. Contact: Bobbi A. McRae, Fiberworks Publications, P.O. Box 49770, Austin, TX 78765-9770; telephone 512-343-6112.

DIETARY GUIDELINES

According to USDA's Human Nutrition Information Service, eating right just means following the Dietary Guidelines. The guidelines encourage people to balance what they eat by enjoying a variety of foods that provide enough protein, vitamins, minerals, fiber and starch, but not too much fat, sodium, sugar, calories, and alcohol.

USDA's consumer nutrition education campaign shows how Americans with busy lifestyles can enjoy more nutritious meals. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans are:

- Eat a variety of foods
- Maintain desirable weight
- Avoid too much fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol
- Eat foods with adequate starch and fiber
- Avoid too much sugar
- Avoid too much sodium
- If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation

For a free copy contact: Consumer Information Center, Department 527-Y, Pueblo, CO 81009.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 9-12, 1993 - Grower Expo 93, Hyatt Regency O'Hare, Rosemont, Illinois. Contact: Julie Stewart, P.O. Box 532, Geneva, IL 60134-0532; telephone 708-208-9080, Fax 708-208-9350.

January 14-15, 1993 - Minnesota Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association (MFVGA) Educational Conference and Trade Show, St. Cloud Civic Center, St. Cloud, Minnesota. Contact: Betty Sannerud, MFVGA, 1207 NE Constance Blvd., Ham Lake, MN 55304; telephone 612-434-5929.

January 19-21, 1993 - 30th Annual New York State Farm Direct Marketing Conference, Holiday Inn, Kingston, New York. Contact: Dale Riggs, Cornell Cooperative Extension, 146 State St., Albany, NY 12207; telephone 518-462-2553

January 29-30, 1993 - Eco-Fair Texas, Austin Convention Center, Austin, Texas. Contact: Stewart Edgington, Eco Fair, P. O. Box 1991, Austin, TX 78767-1991; telephone 512-478-4060.

January 30, 1993 - Alternative Business Options in Agriculture Conference, Midway Motor Lodge, Wausau, Wisconsin. Contact: Stacy Chrislaw, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP), 801 W. Badger Road, Madison, WI 53708-8911; telephone 608-266-7961, Fax 608-266-1300.

February 12-14, 1993 - The California 1993 Farm Conference, California Polytechnical, San Luis Obispo, California. Contact: Shirley Humphrey, Small Farm Center, University of California, Davis, CA 95616; telephone 916-757-8910.

February 14-17, 1993 - The North American Strawberry Growers Association (NASGA) Annual Winter Convention, Tucson East Hilton, Tucson, Arizona. Contact: Bill Courier, NASGA, Route 1, Simpson, IL 62985; telephone 618-949-3884.

February 24-27, 1993 - North American Deer Farmers Association (NADEFA) Annual Conference, Atlanta Airport Hilton Hotel, Atlanta, Georgia. Contact: Barbara R. Fox, NADEFA, 9301 Annapolis Road, #206, Lanham, MD 20706; telephone 301-459-7708, Fax 301-459-7864.

February 27, 1993 - Sixth Shiitake Mushroom Growers Conference will be held at Camp Virgil Tate 4-H Center Conference Room, 16 miles northwest of Charleston, West Virginia. Contact: Paul Goland, Hardscrabble Inc., HC 71, Box 42, Circleville, WV 26804-9601; telephone 304-358-2921.

March 15, 1993 - Ohio Strawberry School, Holiday Inn on the Lane, Columbus, Ohio. Contact: Carl Cantaluppi, OSU-Piketon Research and Extension Center, 1864 Shyville Road, Piketon, OH 45661; telephone 614-289-2071.

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